

Standard 5-6: The student will demonstrate an understanding of developments in the United States since the fall of the Soviet Union and its satellite states in 1992.

5.6.4 Identify examples of cultural exchange between the United States and other countries that illustrate the importance of popular culture and the influence of American popular culture in other places in the world, including music, fashion, food, and movies. (G, H)

Taxonomy Level: B 2 Understand /Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge: In 1st (1-1.4) and 2nd grade (2-2.5), students began to compare the daily lives of American citizens with those of other communities throughout the world. The concepts associated with this indicator will be further addressed in a limited forum in 7th grade (7-7.5) and in high school global studies (GS 6.2, 6.4).

It is essential for students to know:

Examples of cultural exchange between the United States and other countries must include both examples of the sharing of American culture with the rest of the world and of contribution of other world cultures to America. An exclusive concentration on what others have borrowed from America will only reinforce American ethnocentrism and undermine a balanced understanding of America's place in the worldwide community.

Music includes the development and spread of American jazz, rock and roll, country music and American musical theater. However these "American" musical genres were also heavily influenced by other world cultures. The creation of American jazz is the result of African Americans sharing of their cultural heritage and was transferred to Europe during World War I. Rock and roll developed from jazz and the blues but was heavily influenced by the Beatles and other rock groups that originated in England. Country music developed in the colonial backcountry that was heavily settled by the Scots-Irish who brought their musical traditions with them. Some Americans enjoy classical music which had its origins in Europe and many immigrants to America continue to enjoy the music of their native cultures.

In **fashion**, the most important example of the influence of American popular culture is the prevalence and popularity of blue jeans throughout the world. These are thoroughly American as they originated during the California Gold Rush. American movie stars help to spread the popularity of other fashions, however, high fashion is still heavily influenced by European designers.

American **foods** are the result of adaptation from the cultures of immigrants to the United States. There is no truly authentic American food despite the saying "American as apple pie," except for perhaps corn which the Native Americans cultivated. However, American fast food companies have heavily influenced other cultures. You can find McDonald's, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Taco Bell, Coca Cola and many other American fast food restaurants in most places around the world.

Since the 1920s, American **movies** and television have spread American culture around the world. This has caused some misperceptions around the world about typical American experiences. Some countries in the Middle East ban American movies because their R-rated content offends their religious and moral values. Some "American" movie stars hail from many other English-speaking countries including, England, Scotland, Australia and Canada. Increasingly other nations are developing their own movie productions which reflect their own cultural values such as the Indian film industry in Bollywood. Ideas for television shows have originated in other parts of the world and spread to the United States. For instance, some reality shows and some game shows were started in other parts of the world.

Although not specifically mentioned in the indicator, sports are an important part of American popular culture which is relevant to students. A version of stick ball, which Americans call baseball, has transferred to other cultures, particularly to Japan, as a result of the American occupation after World War II. Basketball has also been adopted around the world. However most of the world still prefers soccer to American football and soccer is becoming increasingly popular in the United States.

It is not essential for students to know:

Students do not need to be able to identify specific figures in music, fashion, food, television, movies, sports or any other area of popular culture. Students are asked to make the connection that American culture has an influence throughout the world, identify ways in which that influence is spread, and understand that nations often share popular culture with other areas of the world.

Assessment guidelines:

Appropriate assessments require students to **identify examples** of cultural exchange between the United States and other countries. Students should be able to **explain** how culture is transmitted through travel, television and movies, and trade. Assessments may also ask students to **summarize** the importance of popular culture and the influence of American popular culture in other places in the world and the influence of other cultures on the American culture.